# HERMOINE GRANGER

#### Part One is the Monster

#### We commodify the different body. We stare at those with disabilities and consider them less than human. We have historically deemed them monsters. The commodification of the disabled body has moved from the freak shows and circuses to the medical community.

**Garland-Thomson:**

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Women’s Studies, Emory University. Disabilities Studies Quarterly, Vol. 25, No. 4, *Staring at the Other.* February 2005. Society for Disability Studies. CM

As such, **staring is** **a**n embodied and relational **visual exchange that** carries complex cultural and historical meanings. Like sex and eating, staring **is drenched with significances**, scrupulously **regulated**, **and** intricately **ritualized**. Civility, for example, has always strictly governed staring and prescribed what we do with our eyes in social encounters. In American culture, the one thing everyone knows about staring is that your mother told you not to do it. Both furtive and compelling, **staring is** imagined as a formidable interchange and is **a source of** vivid **narrative** within in the Western cultural archive. **Medusa's stare turned men to stone; the evil eye haunts pervasively**. As ocular-centric modernity developed, myriad institutions lassoed human curiosity by ritualizing the urge to stare at the unexpected. If staring is the effort to make sense of the inexplicable, to craft a narrative of recognition from incoherence, then **the target of staring is often** that which seems **strange or unfamiliar**. In Western history, **the figure of the monster or the freak is** perhaps **the exemplar of the unexpected**, the unfamiliar, the novel. **Monsters and freaks are forms that challenge the status quo of human embodiment.** We have ritualized encounters with such unexpected bodies throughout Western history by staging hyperbolic displays of what is taken to be the extraordinary. From antiquity through modernity, **unusual and inexplicable bodies considered to be monsters and freaks** **have been displayed** by the likes of medieval kings and P.T. Barnum **for entertainment and profit** in courts, street fairs, dime museums, and side shows. In the last two centuries, **medical science has** securely **moved** such **unruly bodies into laboratories, operating rooms, and medical texts in order to establish the borders of the normal and predictable**. Nevertheless, they still leak out to the public in tabloids and horror films. Indeed, **the history of disabled people** in the Western world **is** in part the history of being **on display**, of being visually conspicuous **while being** politically and socially **erased.** Like the word "fascination," a whole vocabulary of words such as "marvelous" and "wonderful" that described the common practice of staring at what I have called extraordinary bodies has faded today into vagueness now that it is considered bad taste to stare at disabled people as a middle class form of entertainment. Monsters, for instance, were congenitally disabled newborns imagined to be omens or messages from the gods. Monstrous bodies were a particular type of prodigy, which were wonderful and awful—in the sense of inspiring wonder and awe—events such as comets and earthquakes. In a pre-scientific world, unexpected and unexplainable occurrences were the maps of truth that had to be read by intense looking. The term "freak" has also been unmoored in the 20th century from its specific original meaning. "Freak" meant whimsical or capricious before today's notion of abnormal highjacked it. A freak was to be stared at because it bore evidence of both "nature's sport" and of God's infinite capacity for mysterious surprise (See Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park, Richard Altick, John Block Friedman, Mary Bain Campbell, Stephen Greenblatt, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson).

#### The difference of female sexuality has historically been considered unsettling because it is inaccessible to male privilege. This led to the representation of women as monsters.

**Creed:**

Barbara Creed. *The Monstrous Feminine- Film, Feminism, and Psychoanalysis.* Routledge 1993. CM

As well as its expression in surrealist art (see illustrations), the myth of the *vagina denlala* is extremely prevalent. Despite local variations, the **myth** generally **states** that **women are terrifying because they have teeth in their vaginas** **and** that the **women must be tamed or the teeth somehow removed or softened** - usually **by a hero** figure - before intercourse can safely take place. **The witch**, of course, **is a familiar female monster**; she is invariably represented as an old, ugly crone who is capable of monstrous acts. **During** the European **witch trials** of recent history **she was accused of** the most hideous crimes: **cannibalism, murder, castration of male victims, and** the advent of **natural disasters** such as storms, fires and the plague. Most **societies** also **have myths about the female vampire**, a creature **who sucks the blood of helpless**, often willing, **victims** and transforms them into her own kind.∂ **Classical mythology**, too, **was populated with gendered monsters**, many of which were female. The **Sirens** of classical mythology were described as enormous birds with the heads of women. They **used their magical songs to lure sailors close to shore** in order to drive the sailors' ships into hidden reefs. The Sirens **then ate their helpless victims.** The Medusa and her two sisters also presented a terrifying sight. They had huge heads, their hair consisted of writhing serpents, their teeth were as long as boars' tusks and they flew through the air on golden wings. **Men unfortunate enough to look upon** the **Medusa** with her evil eye were immediately **turned to stone**. In classical times, pendants and other jewellery depicting the Medusa's frightening appearance were frequently worn to ward off evil spirits, and war- riors painted the female genitals on their shields in order to terrify the enemy. Freud takes up this point in his short essay, 'Medusa's head':∂ If Medusa's head takes the place of a representation of the female genitals, or rather if it isolates their horrifying effects from their pleasure-giving ones, it may be recalled that displaying the genitals is familiar in other connections as an apotropaic act. What arouses horror in oneself will produce the same effect upon the enemy against whom one is seeking to defend oneself. We read in Rabelais of how the Devil took flight when the woman showed him her vulva.∂ (p. 274)∂ It is not by accident that **Freud linked the sight of the Medusa to the** equally horrifying **sight of the mother's genitals**, for **the concept of the monstrous- feminine**, as constructed **within** by **a patriarchal and phallocentric ideology, is related** intimately **to** the problem of **sexual difference and castration**. If we accept Freud's interpretation that the 'Medusa's head takes the place of a representation of the female genitals', we can see that **the Medusan myth** **is** mediated by **a narrative about the *difference* of female sexuality** as a difference which is grounded in monstrousness and **which invokes castration anxiety in the male spectator.** 'The sight of the Medusa's∂ head makes the spectator stiff with terror, turns him to stone.' The irony of this was not lost on Freud, who pointed out that becoming stiff also means having an erection. 'Thus in the original situation it offers consolation to the spectator: he is still in possession of a penis, and the stiffening reassures him of the fact' (ibid., 273). One wonders if the experience of horror - of viewing the horror film - causes similar alterations in the body of the modern male spectator. And what of other phrases that are used by both male and female viewers- phrases such as: 'It scared the shit out of me'; 'It made me feel sick'; 'It gave me the creeps'? What is the relationship between physical states, bodily wastes (even if metaphoric ones) and the horrific - in particular, the monstrous-feminine?

#### The female and disabled body is considered the abject and represents the ejection of self within horror. This notion of the abject also creates a space in horror and the monstrous for those with disability or a representation of anything considered “deviant”.

**Creed:**

Barbara Creed. *The Monstrous Feminine- Film, Feminism, and Psychoanalysis.* Routledge 1993. CM

The horror film would appear to be, in at least three ways, an illustration of the work of abjection. First, the **horror** film **abounds in images of abjection, foremost of which is the corpse**, whole and mutilated, **followed by an array of bodily wastes** such as blood, vomit, saliva, sweat, tears and putrefying flesh. In terms of Kristeva's notion of the border, **when we say such-and-such a horror film 'made me sick' or 'scared the shit out of me' we are actually** **foregrounding that** specific horror film **as a 'work of abjection'** or 'abjection at work' - almost in a literal sense. Viewing the **horror** film **signifies a desire** not only **for perverse pleasure** (confronting sickening, horrific images! being filled with terror/desire for the undifferentiated) but also **a desire**, once having been filled with perversity, taken pleasure in perversity, **to** throw up, throw out, **eject the abject (from the safety of the spectator's seat)**. In Kristeva’s view, **woman is specifically related to polluting objects** which fall into two categories: **excremental and menstrual**. **This** in turn **gives woman a special relationship to the abject** - a crucial point which I will discuss shortly. Second, **the concept of a border is central to the construction of the monstrous** in the horror film; that which crosses or threatens to cross the 'border' is abject. Although the specific nature of the border changes from film to film, **the function of the monstrous remains** the same - **to bring about an encounter between the symbolic order an**d that which threatens its **stability**. In some horror films **the monstrous is produced** at the border **between human and inhuman,** **man and beast** *(Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, Creature from the Black Lagoon, King Kong);* in others the border is between the **normal and the supernatural, good and evil** *(Carrie, The Exorcist, The Omen, Rosemary's Baby);* **or** the monstrous is produced at the border which separates those who take up their **proper gender roles** from those who do not *(Psycho, Dressed to Kill, A Reflection of Fear);* **or** the border is between **normal and abnormal sexual desire** *(The Hunger Cat People).* Most **horror** films also **construct** **a border** **between** what Kristeva refers to as **'the clean and proper body' and the abject body, or the body which has lost its form and integrity.** The fully symbolic body must bear no indication of its debt to nature. In Kristeva's view **the image of woman's body, because of its maternal functions**, acknowledges its 'debt to nature' and consequently **is more likely to signify the abject** (ibid., 102). The notion of the material female body is central to the construction of the border in the horror film. I will explore this crucial area fully in the following chapters.

#### Part Two is Affirming My Monster

#### I advocate that adolescents ought to have the right to make autonomous medical decisions in order to become monsters- it’s time we reject the notion to conform and condemn others for being different. The witch is the monster that speaks to me and the intersection of my identity as a woman with disability. I am affirming different in a way that is magical.

#### People with disabilities are accused and persecuted for witchcraft- let us take back this identity as a form of power.

Igwe:

Leo Igwe, Child Witch Killings and Africans. James Randi Educational Foundation. January 28 2013. <http://archive.randi.org/site/index.php/swift-blog/2000-child-witch-killings-and-africans.html>. CM

There is need for an intensive public enlightenment campaign to get **people** in northern Ghana to abandon the superstitious belief that **associate**s **disability with withcraft and magic**. **People** need to be educated to act and **react with** care and compassion, not **irrational fear**, **to** any form of **disability or ‘abnormality**’ in children or in any other human being. But this much needed awareness program cannot happen due to lack of principled stance on the witchcraft phenomena. Witchcraft is a charged and controversial topic. And many locals do not like tinkering with it. There are too many people; local chiefs, priests, soothsayers, etc. with vested interest in witchcraft belief and practice. Those trying to combat witchcraft related abuse are mainly faith based organisations like the one managing this orphanage or religious individuals who actually believe in witchcraft. They do not openly question or are willing to challenge witch beliefs.∂ For instance, two NGOs working to address the problem in the region stated in their brochure that they ‘do not challenge the existence or otherwise of witchcraft and its effects on individuals and communities’. It is difficult to understand how these organisations can execute a comprehensive and effective campaign without challenging witchcraft claims. Getting the local population to understand that witchcraft is an imaginary crime, a form of superstition, should be a critical part of any efforts or program to tackle and eradicate witch persecution and killing.∂ Apart from public education, victims of witchcraft accusation need practical help and support. Many **children** at this orphanage were born **with deformities** in different parts of their body. Some of them have speaking or hearing difficulties. A few cannot talk, walk or communicate effectively. One child has some problem on the fingers, and another on the toes.∂ One child was born with a sore on one of the legs which has so far defied all the locally available medical care. Some of the children at the center will eventually die if they do not recieve the urgent medical assistance they need in order to survive. Some urgent surgery and medical care could rectify the health problems, ensure their survival and help save their lives. Unfortunately, the required medical expertise is not available in the country. And even if it is available, the local care center cannot afford it.∂ These children **are branded witches** not only **due to** fear and superstition in their families and communities but also due **ignorance** of the medical solutions to their health problems and lack of resources to cater for their needs.∂ Hence, I am using this opportunity to appeal to all well meaning individuals and groups, skeptics and friends out there to come to the aid of these innocent children and others who are suffering **and** dying due to **superstition,** dogma and irrationalism in the region.

#### The aff embraces the narrative of the monstrous as a liberation strategy for women and people with disabilities- I subvert the concept of being “monstrous” and embrace it as a symbol of strength.

**Ruberg:**

Bonnie Ruberg. Girl Power: Women Monsters and Monstrous Women. 1 November 2005. Escapist Magazine. <http://www.escapistmagazine.com/articles/view/video-games/issues/issue_17/105-Women-Monsters-and-Monstrous-Women.4> CM

**Monsters**, by definition, **are altered human beings**. Zombies, for example, fit this mold nicely, as do ghosts and vampires. **Women monsters**, as seen above, **have been altered not just physically, but also ideologically**. **They've changed** themselves **by stepping outside the accepted image of complacent womanhood**. Yet **they possess the remnants of humanity**. **We**, in turn, **see ourselves in the monsters. We begin to understand our own monstrousness, our own departure from the "human**."∂ **Women** gamers **are** in this way also **monsters.** We - indeed, all **intelligent, independent females** - **break the accepted standards of womanhood**. We have defamed our traditional femininity by dabbling in a supposedly male world, that of video games. As many men would readily agree, we have made ourselves a monstrosity. In hopes of fighting this image, **women** have struggled **for years** to convince the gaming industry of our true humanity; they **have sought out power and respect**.∂ Women, of course, have a right to want strong female characters in the games they play. But maybe they've been looking in the wrong places. **What better role model than the monster**, whose ability to incite fear is so powerful it reaches out from the game? In the parallel worlds of survival horror and the gaming industry, both dotted with damsels and heroines, perhaps **it's time to turn and embrace ourselves, the monsters**.

#### My autonomous medical decision is to embrace Magical Feminism and the narrative of the witch. I am resisting the medicalization of my body as a person with a disability and I am rejecting the constructs that the patriarchy places upon me.

Wells:

Kimberly Ann Wells, Screaming, Flying and Laughing: Magical Feminism’s Witches in Contemporary Film, Television, and Novels. May 2007. CM

In her 1984 New York Times review of John Updike’s Witches of Eastwick, Margaret Atwood suggests “What a culture has to say about **witchcraft**, whether in jest∂ or in earnest, **has** a lot **to do with** its views of **sexuality and power**, **and** especially with∂ the **apportioning of powers between the sexes**. **The witches were burned** not because∂ 7∂ they were pitied but **because they were feared**” (3 emphasis mine). Atwood’s∂ comments illustrate that **in examining witches, we participate in the feminist project of**∂ **studying** the “apportioning of powers between the sexes”– how we understand the∂ **connections between gender and power** today, and that much of the current struggle∂ with contemporary women understanding and embracing feminism has to do with fear∂ of change. That old and ugly women are bad witches and beautiful women are good∂ witches reveals the various ways and understandings of witches in fiction provides, as∂ well, an understanding of women within the culture that produces that fiction.∂ Interestingly, Anne Llewelyn Barstow’s pivotal **study of** real women accused as∂ **witches in the sixteenth century argues** that the fact “that European **women** first∂ **emerged into full legal adulthood as witches**, **that they were** first accorded independent∂ legal status in order to be **prosecuted for witchcraft, indicates** both **their vulnerability**∂ **and** the level of **antifeminism in** modern European **society**” (41). This **emergence of**∂ **women as legal entity and witch**, at the same historical moment, also **shows how**∂ strongly **connected the concept of independent woman and** our modern concept of∂ **witch has been** ever since. **Both feminist and witch are scapegoated as evil**, with evil∂ meaning **those who endanger society’s family values** and therefore who **must be**∂ **punished for exercising powers that patriarchy defines as more rightly belonging to**∂ **men**: independence, outspoken belief in oneself, sexual freedom, education, and choice∂ in occupation. **Both groups are women who struggle with patriarchy and power**. Susan∂ 8∂ Faludi traced a backlash in the late 1980s that still seems to grow stronger, partly∂ because while many people believe in the principals of feminism, **many are afraid to**∂ **identify as feminists for fear of that backlash and corresponding “witchhunt**,”∂ represented by the widespread use of denigrating terms like “feminazi” **among** certain∂ **conservative groups**.

#### My advocacy opens the debate space to new voices and challenges the patriarchal order that exists in academic activities. Affirm the metaphor of the witch to deconstruct the negativity that surrounds the notion of being a “monster”- I do not want to fit in because it is the things that make me different that make me powerful.

Wells:

Kimberly Ann Wells, Screaming, Flying and Laughing: Magical Feminism’s Witches in Contemporary Film, Television, and Novels. May 2007. CM

To be a good witch or a bad witch is one of the central questions of popular∂ depictions of the witch, but it is not as simple as one versus the other.3∂ Often, **through**∂ her **challenges to patriarchal order, the witch has been** considered a “bad witch.” But∂ her actions may be seen as **good in a new context**, when **written not by the** victor∂ (**patriarchy**). It is no wonder that **feminists have been** particularly **attracted to** the idea∂ of **the witch as a metaphor to explain** and exalt **the unruly woman for decades**. Xavière∂ Gauthier, in a 1980s introduction to a literary review, dedicated to exploring women’s∂ rebellious, non-conformist creativity titled “Porquoi Sorcières” exclaims:∂ Why witches? Because witches sing. Can I hear this singing? It is the sound∂ of another voice. They tried to make us believe that women did not know how∂ to speak or write; that they were stutterers or mutes. That is because they tried∂ to make women speak straightforwardly, logically, geometrically, in strict∂ conformity. In reality, they croon lullabies, they howl, they gasp, they babble,∂ they shout, they sigh. They are silent, and even their silence can be heard. (199)∂ In her enthusiasm, Gauthier over-essentializes these women as “crooners,” and∂ 9∂ “babblers,” defining them as opposite to a “they” (presumably men and even perhaps∂ non-creative women) who are “logical, straightforward and geometrical.” Gauthier is∂ also very much a part of a particular moment of Second Wave feminism when the∂ French Feminists were exploring ideas that have been a part of the negotiated spaces of∂ “feminisms” since the 1970s. But her over-enthusiasm reveals **the witch’s appeal** for∂ **women interested in breaking patriarchal rules; the witch’s very existence defies**∂ **patriarchy. The** popularly depicted **witch**4∂ **is a woman who breaks rules and threatens**∂ **change**, just **as the feminist wishes** to do. In her analysis of Gauthier’s appropriation∂ of **the witch as feminist,** Naomi Goldenberg claims Gauthier’s enthusiastic use of∂ witches **is a metaphor that connects** the attraction of the **witch’s speech to** the radical∂ unruliness of all creative women, and therefore, making a connection between **the**∂ **magic trans-formative power of the witch** and the creative works written about her:∂ through **the metaphor of witches’ speech**, Gauthier [. . .] **call[s] on the world to**∂ **pay attention** to the new words they want to say– to the words that will be∂ sufficiently deep– in both a psychological and collective sense– that they will∂ sound intoxicating, transformative, crazy, scary, and above all, powerful. [. . .]∂ **Using witchy words as magic words,** that is, as words to make things happen,∂ **was not** an **uncommon** practice **in** 1970s **feminism** (203, emphasis mine).∂ By **placing creativity, power, and feminism in the same categories as witchcraft**, we∂ **define(s) female power**, looking at witches within novels and films that are seen as∂ 10∂ popular women’s texts, a so-called “women’s genre,” and examine how those texts∂ may make change happen. **We examine the “transformative” power of feminism** in an∂ entertaining format. **Magic, in the hands of powerful witches, can change the world**,∂ **just as feminism strives to do**.

#### Part Three is Affirming Magic

#### Debate is a fiction. In this discursive setting, students pretend to fiat government agents that exist in what is considered the quote/unquote “real world.” We pretend like we’re policymakers that make real decisions, when in reality all we’re doing is playing make believe. We cast a spell in the debate space to help us visualize and understanding the ramifications of certain actions that agents can take. Like other debaters of the past and present, I will create magic and affirm a fairy tale.

#### The role of the ballot is to affirm the becoming of sorceresses- this is the only way to break down static identities which key to solving oppression.

Ramey:

Joshua Delpech-Ramey. Deleuze, Guattari, and The Politics of Sorcery. SubStance Vol. 39, No. 1, Issue 121: Spiritual Politics After Deleuze (2010) pp. 8-23. University of Wisconsin Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40801056>. CM

Becoming, for Deleuze and Guattari, is neither the immanent mode of existence ultimately transcended by the Platonic Ideas in which they participate, nor is it the form of oppositional mediation in which Hegel saw the reason of history’s ruse. “**Becomings**,” generally written in the agrammatical plural, **are the multiplicity of experiential states in which lines are blurred** **between human consciousness** and animal awareness, between biopsychic life and the nature of matter itself. What the authors have in mind, in general, are **processes of transformation that issue in** strange, uncanny, or even fantastic hybrids: the **stuff of fictions**, and science fictions, that tell of inconceivable life forms, the “eldritch feralities” of H.P. Lovecraft’s lore. But becomings abound also at the interstices of speciation and phylogenetic variation, even when such mutants exists only in rumors of werewolves, the legends of vampires, tales of she-wolves and ape-men. For Deleuze and Guattari, **becomings accrue at the vanishing point where history and legend meet**, at the twilit horizon where **monstrosities of fiction reveal dynamics that translate the most profound facts of biopsychic life. In becomings, borders between the sexes and the species, groups and individuals, matter and mind grow indiscernible, imperceptible.** Yet such becomings are not vague, and involve definite thresholds. Deleuze and Guattari in fact identify a *series* of thresholds in becoming: becoming- woman, becoming-animal, becoming-molecular, becoming-intense. As one can observe in the ordering of this series, **the movement of becoming is** quite specific: it is **a movement *away* from the stereotypically “male” ego, fixated on its isolated body, paranoid about its fragile identity**, us- ing its reason to defend itself against the world, ***toward* the more supple** and supine flesh and less dualistic **mind of “woman,**” *further* toward the instinctual immanence of the animal, *into* an inhabitation of the depths of vibrational and energetic patterns verging on the white noise of chaos. In literature and anthropology, **reports abound of *sorcerers* who are capable of traversing and operating upon this line of increasing intensity through which the human being ecstatically finds itself capable of powers and affects outside the normal range.**

# FRONTLINES

## A2 Antiblackness/Queer Theory K

The aff is a form of disidentification- transforms whitewashed or privileged characters and radicalizes them as a method of subverting the notion of a “typical” queer POC and resisting tropes. The aff is a particularly good method because it embraces the narrative of the witch- takes back and rejects the categorization of the witch as a white woman.

Alexandrina:

Alexandrina. Radicalizing Fantasy and the Power of Disidentification. December 9 2013. Black Girl Dangerous. http://www.blackgirldangerous.org/2013/12/radicalizing-fantasy-power-disidentification/ CM

This is a perfect example of **disidentification**. Clem’s status **identifies how character subtleties can be reinterpreted and radicalized**—“**a survival strategy that works within and outside the dominant public sphere simultaneously**,” as Muñoz said. A hero and a villain as queer in the same Hollywood blockbuster? How cool is that? **My fantasy disidentification is Hermione Granger**, the smart heroine of the Harry Potter series **who lives in the borderlands of Muggle and magical culture.** JK Rowling included characters of color in this series—if a student at Hogwarts had brown skin, we knew about it. Lee Jordan and Angelina Johnson? Black. Padma & Pavarti Patel? South Asian. Cho Chang? Nondescript Asian (for a full analysis of Cho Chang and Asian stereotyping see [this post](http://henryjenkins.org/2013/10/to-jk-rowling-from-cho-chang-responding-to-asian-american-stereotyping-in-popular-culture.html" \t "_blank) by Diana Lee). White characters were not described by race, but by their lack of description. **Hermione** Granger **was**n’t **described by** her race or skin color either, but only as **having bushy brown hair.** **As a mixed race person, I read into Hermione’s unwritten silences and declared her a mixed race girl too.** After all, name me a mixed girl whose multiracial identity isn’t manifested in her hair sometimes. For me, **Hermione is a** powerful **metaphor for the fears around race mixing** in the United States. **She’s called a “mudblood”**—the worst insult to describe someone with Muggle ancestry. **Magical and non-magical blood mixing sounds** a lot **like** the **racialized fears** of miscegenation. Yet Hermione knows magic spells better than her “full blood” counterparts and saved their lives not only with her knowledge of magic but also her understanding of the Muggle world and what it takes for witches and wizards to “pass” as non-magical. **Hermione defies the tropes of the tragic mulatta**. And **by recircuiting Hermione’s identity, I see a kick-ass mixed race heroine.**

## A2 T Medical

The patriarchy is a fucking disease bye